

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE C1-5

WASHINGTON POST

23 October 1977

4,000 Miles Of Chinese Puzzles

By David S. Broder

CHANGSHA, China — We had been in China for almost two weeks when I caught my first glimpse of what might have been a bulldozer. It was just a quick flash of a hazy silhouette on a distant hill, as our train rolled south from Wuhan to Changsha. But it ended a long quest.

It was back in Peking that I had remarked, "Gosh, what these people could do with a bulldozer." Wherever we looked, we saw a building or street under construction by straining men and women, with only wheelbarrows and shovels at their disposal.

"They've got them," said George Bush, the former chief of the U.S. Liaison Office in Peking and the head of our 13-member touring party. "I saw them when we were here two years ago."

And so began the search. In Peking, there were trucks and buses galore. There were even a dozen street-sweeping-and-washing machines out on Tien An Men Square to clean up after a giant reception for a visiting Cambodian leader. But not one bulldozer did we see.

As we traveled across the country, we continued to see impressive evidence of China's reconstruction. There were brigades of men and women, young and old, turning earth with shovels and hauling it this way and that, in carts of all

sizes and descriptions. It was almost as if Chairman Mao had left an instruction in his will, "Let no pile of earth remain unmoved."

But never a bulldozer. From the windows of cars and trains, and every time we landed or took off in a plane, I scanned the landscape. For three misty days on a Yangtze River steamer, I went out on deck or stood at the cabin window, thinking surely one would appear in the fields.

But in more than 4,000 miles of travel through six provinces in 16 days, there was only that one glimpse of what might have been a bulldozer.

I dwell on that subject, because I came back from this first visit to China with the feeling that its future — and the future of its relations with the United States and the world — is directly tied to the transition from human labor to bulldozers, the reach for a modern industrial economy.

That is not to say that economics is more important than politics; only that it is more visible. As a novice, I could not judge what is happening politically in China a year after Mao's death.

See CHINA, Page C5

C1

1 of 7